

AHMOSE AND THE ERUPTION OF THERA

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INTRODUCTION

Major African and Eurasian tectonic plates join restlessly beneath the Aegean, forming the Hellenic volcanic arc curving from the Saronic Gulf to the Anatolian coast north of Rhodes. The Cycladic island of Thera (modern Santorini) lies midway along this arc (Fig. 1). Beginning over a million years ago, a dozen large scale eruptions transformed Thera into the shape of a backwards C enclosing deep volcanic caideras.

At the height of the island's prosperity in the mid-second millennium B.C., an earthquake awakened the Thera volcano, dormant for 15,000



Fig. 1. MAP OF SITES MENTIONED

there was widespread darkness, wind, lightning, rain, and deafening noise.

This was one of the largest European volcanic events of the past 100,000 years. Using a figure of 30 cubic km of ejecta, geophysicists have assigned it a 6.9 on the Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI), a logarithmic scale similar to the Richter one for earthquakes. The most comparable recent eruptions occurred in the Indonesian archipelago at Tambora in 1815 (VEI 7) and at Krakatau in 1883 (VEI 6.3).

Debris completely covered Thera's settlements. One of them, on the southern coast near the modern village of Akrotiri, was rediscovered by Spyridon Marinatos in 1967. As at Pompeii and Herculaneum, thick ash deposits had effectively preserved a wealth of architecture, wall paintings, and small finds (Fig. 2). Thera studies have become a significant new field of Aegean Bronze Age art and archaeology. One of the most crucial Thera issues is the date of the eruption, for its accurate determination would provide a rare fixed point in the chronology of the entire period and region.

DATES AND DATA

When did Thera explode? The short answer is, we do not yet know.
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years. Shortly thereafter, a precursory ash fall warned the Therans that more was to follow. Unlike the Pompeians, they seem to have heeded this warning, departing with all they could load onto boats. Next came the dramatic, Plinian phase of the eruption, during which a column of pulverized magma shot 30 or 35 km into the air. When the waters of the Aegean flowed over the vent's exposed magma, the eruption increased greatly in violence. Fresh volcanic material surged out laterally, succeeded by horizontal flows of gas-rich clouds laden with ash, pumice, and blocks. For two or three days,

DAVID P. SILVERMAN, member of ARCE's Board of Governors describes his present career as "multi-positional." That's a bit of an understatement. For a start, he is professor of Egyptology at the University of Pennsylvania and Chairman of the Dept. of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. In addition, Prof. Silverman is Curator-in-Charge of the Egyptian Section of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Not one to rest on his laurels, he is also Visiting Willcombe Professor in Fine Arts at Harvard University. Dr. Silverman modestly claims that being in the right place at the right time explains much of his career. It is his field work that has brought him the most attention. He and Dr. Rita E. Freed of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston are co-directors of the Saqqara expedition, jointly sponsored by the Philadelphia and Boston Museums. Dr. Silverman had been working in Bersheh, recording the inscriptions and decorative materials, especially in the tomb of Nehri II. The 1992 season was about to start when the Egyptian Antiquities Authority postponed the Bersheh Expedition for a second season. They suggested Saqqara as an alternative site. The dig was funded and approved within three days. The first two seasons saw the recording of the Old Kingdom (6th Dynasty) tomb of Meri-Teti and the Middle Kingdom tombs of Ihy and Hetep. The nobles, from the court of 12th Dynasty pharaoh Amenemhet I, decided not to be buried according to tradition near the pharaoh's pyramid, but rather at Saqqara, close to the pyramid of the earlier pharaoh, Meri-Teti, in whose mortuary cult they served. By 1995, Prof. Silverman and his co-director Rita Freed had cleared the tomb shafts and corridors leading to



DAVID P. SILVERMAN AT SAQQARA.
CREDIT: UNIV. OF PENNA. MUS. OF ARCH. & ANTHRO.

the burial chambers of Ihy and Hetep, and had recorded the inscriptions within. They had "rediscovered" two 4,000-year-old noblemen's tombs which appear to have been purposely extended into the pyramid complex of Meri-Teti, whose mortuary cult they had served. This is the first known occurrence of high ranking officials who purposely, perhaps secretly, extended their tombs under a pharaoh's sacred enclosure wall. It provides new insights into the life and burial practices of the officials who were responsible for perpetuating the memory of their deified pharaohs. Professor Silverman started his career at Rutgers University. As a senior fellow and Rutgers Scholar, his thesis subject was *Egyptian Influences on Early Medieval Art*. After graduation, he spent the summer in France and England, and considered enrolling at Oxford for further study. However, he was advised to enroll in the Oriental Institute's graduate program in language, with

extra courses in archaeology, history, and art. His interest in language was reflected in his early field work. With ARCE's help he became Field Director for the Epigraphic Survey of unpublished Middle Kingdom and Early New Kingdom monuments in Egypt. By recording inscriptions on Middle Kingdom stela and early New Kingdom tombs, he hoped to establish evidence of the spoken language of ancient Egypt. As Project Director at the Oriental Institute, he enlarged his areas of expertise by curating *The Magic of Egyptian Art*. He was next asked to write the graphic panels for *The Treasures of Tutankhamun* at the Field Museum and Oriental Institute. His curatorial talents then took him to Denver where he was consulting curator for the exhibition on *Ramesses the Great* at the Denver Museum of Natural History. When the first traveling exhibit was prepared by the University Museum on Archaeological Treasures of Ancient Egypt, David Silverman was once again in the right place at the right time. The idea was an immediate success, and he next put together (with R. Dyson and David O'Connor) a traveling exhibition on *The Egyptian Mummy: Secrets and Science* for the University Museum.

The study of language remains a subject dear to his heart, and he has written monographs and articles on grammar, philology, art and religion. Most recently he edited and contributed to two new works: *Ancient Egyptian Kingship. For His Ka: Essays Offered In Memory of Klaus Bauer*. In the midst of his other time consuming responsibilities Prof. Silverman is preparing an article for *Studies in Honor of Edward F. Wente: A Litany from the Eighteenth Dynasty Tomb of Merneith*.

Joan Meisel

DANGERS IN THE FIELD: UNEXPLODED LANDMINES AND MILITARY ORDNANCE IN EGYPT

BY WILLIAM C. S. REMSEN

EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES PROJECT (EAP) FORMER PROJECT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Twentieth century warfare in Egypt has left behind a terrible and invisible legacy of landmines and other unexploded munitions. Many of these have been removed or fenced off through international cooperation and the efforts of Egyptian military engineers. However, landmines are intended to be difficult to find and even areas that have been "swept" may include unexploded munitions. Staff members of several ARCE-EAP funded projects have recently found, luckily without injury, unexploded ordinance while conducting approved field surveys in unfenced areas of the Sinai and along the Red Sea Coast. While major tourist destinations in Egypt can be considered safe, landmines are concentrated in military areas in the Sinai and along the Red Sea coast, as well as in the north western Egyptian desert where military action took place in the Second World War. Unpublished sources indicate that a large number of persons have been killed or injured by these indiscriminate devices. The potential dangers should not be exaggerated, but they need to be recognized.

A recent estimate states that Egypt may have as many as 23 million landmines deployed on its territory. This is the highest number of landmines in any country in the world, although several other countries are estimated to have greater densities of landmines. Iran, Angola, Afghanistan, Iraq and Cambodia also have very large numbers of landmines. Many landmines in these other countries

were more recently deployed, specifically as antipersonnel weapons, and are even smaller and harder to detect than those in Egypt. Approximately 15,000 people are killed or maimed worldwide by landmines (Strada, 1996:42 - 44).

To locate and remove all the landmines in Egypt is a gigantic and nearly impossible task. Many known landmine areas have not been cleared and are cordoned off by single or double barbed-wire fences and iden-

work in remote areas of Egypt may expose intrepid visitors to increased risks. The staff members of the ARCE-EAP funded projects who discovered unexploded ordinance were working in areas of Sinai that had been swept of mines and had been declared safe. The author has encountered unexploded medium caliber shells along the Red Sea coast at Sadana Island and large caliber shells near Wadi Digla east of Cairo. Neither area was marked in any way.

Warning signage at minefields may include the phrases shown in Arabic and English in Figure 1. Older signs may be written in Hebrew in the Sinai or in English, German or Italian in western Egypt.

Common sense recommends avoiding all posted areas and areas with potential military value along the Red Sea coast and in the Sinai unless they are clearly well traveled. Consult with local authorities. All modern military installations are generally fenced and posted and should be avoided. Travel and work in restricted areas should only be done with the full permission of the Egyptian Security authorities. If one is inadvertently in a potentially dangerous area, carefully follow tire tracks and footprints out of the area. Do not travel at night. Landmines and other ordinance come in countless shapes and sizes and anything suspicious should be avoided. According to the Director of Military Intelligence, the correct action to follow upon encountering landmines is

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

MINES	أفام
LANDMINES	أفام أرضيه
AREA OF MINES	منطقة الأفام
DEADLY DANGER (WITH SKULL & CROSS BONES)	خطر مميت

FIG. 1. POSSIBLE ENGLISH AND ARABIC TEXT ON
SIGNS AT MINE FIELDS IN EGYPT

tified by signs. However, the wire fences and warning signs are often greatly weathered or are simply missing, making the dangerous areas difficult to see. Landmines placed years ago may have effective lives of centuries (Strada, 1996:45). Corrosion over time may actually increase the sensitivity of the fuses in unexploded munitions, making them even more dangerous. Various battlefield areas in France from the First World War are still closed to visitors for this reason.

Unfortunately, geographic locations of military and economic significance have often attracted ancient human activity as well as modern construction and military defenses. The recent liberalizing of travel and archaeological and geological field

AN AWARD, A GRANT, A FILM FESTIVAL AND A GUEST

RESEARCH SUPPORTING MEMBER

Emory University has just joined the ARCE consortium as a Research Supporting Member. That means that the University will have the right to appoint a faculty member to the ARCE Board of Governors. We're very pleased to have Emory's active participation in ARCE. Members will remember the excellent annual meeting that Emory hosted in 1994. Dr. Gay Robins was the conference organizer.

THE WILLIAM McHUGH AWARD

ARCE administers the William P. McHugh Award in Egyptian Geoarchaeology and Prehistory. The award is given to predoctoral students, American or non American, who are carrying out research on the geoarchaeology or prehistoric periods of Egypt. The award, which amounts to \$525, may be used to purchase equipment or for travel, as specified by the award candidate in a letter to the awards committee. The fund was established by the McHugh Family to honor William P. McHugh, a geoarchaeologist who worked in and loved Egypt. For further information, call or write the New York office.

Bill is being honored at the special Centennial Celebrations of the

Geological Survey of Egypt, being held in Cairo November 19-22. His work on radar rivers is being cited for special attention.

GRANTS

ARCE received a grant of \$34,596 from the National Endowment for the Humanities in support of its senior scholar fellowships. Support for NEH scholarships has been given by the Andrew Mellon Foundation, in a new private initiative announced by the Endowment in October.

ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY EGYPTIAN CINEMA

Committed to our long-term goal of presenting the extraordinary achievement of Egyptian cinema to American audiences, ARCE is pleased to announce the second Annual Egyptian Film Festival. Funded by the United States Information Agency, the festival is being held in Philadelphia February 27-March 4, 1997 in partnership with the Middle East Center of the University of Pennsylvania (the chair is Everett Rowson) and International House of Philadelphia. The festival will include six recent Egyptian films, with an emphasis on diverse styles and genres. Among the films are "Asphalt Devils" (Usama Fawzi), "America Abracadabra" (Khairy Bishara), and

"On Boys, Girls, and the Veil" (Yousry Nasrallah) that had been shown last year in New York and is returning by popular demand. This is the first time that a festival of Egyptian films has ever been held in Philadelphia.

Livia Alexander, of the ARCE New York staff and Walter Armbrust, former ARCE fellow and currently at Princeton University, are chief festival organizers.

Several of the films will be shown in New York on the weekend of March 9: watch for details.

SPECIAL ARCE GUEST

Advance arrangements are now being made to host Mrs. Amira Khattab during the month of April 1997. Amira, who has helped ARCE fellows and archaeologists associated with ARCE over many years, is celebrating her 30th year of work with the Center. And as a tribute to her dedication ARCE and its Board have invited her to visit the United States at the time of the Annual Meeting. Amira has been invited to stay in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, and Berkeley, in addition to New York and Ann Arbor, and special galas are being planned to honor her in Philadelphia and elsewhere. 🐾

Terry Walz

THE AMERICAN DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT EGYPT ESSAYS

NANCY THOMAS, EDITOR

Essays by James P. Allen, Dorothea Arnold, Lanny Bell, Robert S. Bianchi, Edward Brovarski, Richard A. Fazzini, Timothy Kendall, Peter Lacovara, David O'Connor and Kent R. Weeks. Companion volume to the exhibition catalog.

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ARCE WEB SITE

We are pleased to announce that ARCE can now be found on the World Wide Web. Our informative and attractive new Web site provides a wealth of up-to-date information on specifically ARCE topics like the annual meeting and New York, Cairo and other chapter public programs. A section on "Research Opportunities" describes the fellowship program and lists ongoing projects and expeditions affiliated with ARCE. The section on "Conservation Projects" describes the current work of the Egyptian Antiquities Project and lists time-sensitive announcements concerning conservation projects. The Web site also has a section on "Resources and Publications", ending with a list of other Websites of interest with the ability to link directly to them. There is membership information for potential members and members who have a question about some aspect or other of membership. Various forms for events are attached where appropriate. The Web site was developed by ARCE's own Catherine Clyne and Web site consultant Miriam Hendel. It is our hope that this site will be a useful tool for our members and a means of attracting more and more people to ARCE. The address is <http://www.arce.org>. Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

ANNUAL MEETING

The 1997 Annual Meeting will take place April 11-13 in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan, where our gracious hosts will be the Kelsey Museum and the Department of History. Janet Richards and Terry Wilfong from the Kelsey Museum will be vetting proposed Egyptological papers. Juan Cole from the history department will do the

honors for the Islamicists. There will be a reception on Friday in the Dinosaur Hall and the annual banquet on Saturday will be at the Asquared Grill of the Campus Inn Hotel. A special exhibition **Women and Gender in Ancient Egypt: From Prehistory to Late Antiquity** will be on view along with the reinstallation of the permanent Egyptian collection at the museum. Both will be open for extended hours during the time of the meeting. One special feature this year: everything is within walking distance – no buses! The Call for Papers was sent out in October; if you did not receive one and would like to, please contact Elaine Schapker at ARCE New York – phone: (212) 529-6661 or fax: (212) 529-6856. Pre-registration packages will be sent out in February.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN NEW YORK
Mark Easton, Cairo Director will

be giving an update on the Egyptian Antiquities Project on January 8. We hope to make this an annual event, because so many people are interested in the conservation projects in Cairo and other venues in northern Egypt. Alaa El-Habashi, who spent some time working with the Egyptian Antiquities Project, will lecture in February on "Cairo Before and After the Comité Conservation des Monuments de l'art Arabe." We are also collaborating with the Westchester chapter of the AIA on what has become the traditional Sunday symposium in early March. The proposed topic is "Cosmos and Chaos: the Kings of Unity in the Middle East." Details will be sent to members in December. And, of course, watch our new Web site for these and other upcoming programs. 🐾

Elaine Schapker

THE AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT THE INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PHILADELPHIA THE MIDDLE EAST CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



Present FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY EGYPTIAN CINEMA

February 27-Tuesday, March 4, 1997

International House of Philadelphia
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Featured films are the U.S. premieres of **Asphalt Devils** by emerging director Usama Fawzi and the acclaimed **My Life, My Passion**. Other films include **America Abracadabra** by Khairy Bishara and the popular **On Boys, Girls and the Veil** by Yousry Nasrallah. The festival will host visiting directors, critics and academic experts and will include a film directors' round table and a seminar on recent Egyptian cinema. For information, contact International House at (800) 969-7392, <http://www.liberty.net.org/~ihouse> or the American Research Center in Egypt, Tel: (212) 529-6661, e-mail: arce.center@nyu.edu, <http://www.arce.org>

Photo from *On Boys, Girls & the Veil*

HAJJ PAINTINGS: FOLK ART OF THE GREAT PILGRIMAGE

BY ANN PARKER AND AVON NEAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.: SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION PRESS, 1995

REVIEWED BY SUSAN ALLEN
DEPARTMENT OF EGYPTIAN ART
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



It is perhaps unfair to review a book one had always meant to write, but nonetheless, I am very glad the book has been done. *Hajj Paintings: Folk Art of the Great Pilgrimage* by Ann Parker and Avon Neal, a photographer-writer team, documents the Egyptian custom of decorating house walls with paintings commemorating the completion of the Hajj or Great Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. Over the course of the last ten years, the photographer Ann Parker traveled up and down the Nile Valley, in the Delta and along the Red Sea coast photographing Hajj paintings on the walls of ordinary village houses, meeting the Hajjis when possible, and tracking down and interviewing a number of the artists. An experienced photographer of folk art and the author of several books on folk art in the United States and Latin America, she first saw these paintings from the Cairo-Aswan train and recognized them as folk art of a particularly ephemeral form that needed to be recorded. She also discovered that they were virtually unknown outside Egypt and therefore unappreciated as a folk art tradition.

When I first saw Hajj paintings in 1973 in Luxor and Kurna, I did not think of them as "folk art" but as a cultural narrative and artifacts. Perhaps conditioned by looking at ancient Egyptian tomb paintings, I was curious as to how the tradition originated and the story they told.

The book I would have written at that time would have included photographs of the paintings, but would have focused on interviews with the Hajjis themselves about why they chose the particular scenes and motifs, when they went on Hajj and their place in the community.

Hajj paintings are commissioned by the families of pilgrims as part of the celebration of their return from Mecca and Medina. Since the pilgrimage must be performed during the twelfth month, the Dhu al-Hijjah, of the Moslem calendar and only lasts a few weeks at most, all of the paintings are completed quickly during the pilgrim's absence. As they are created for a specific event and purpose: to celebrate the return of the pilgrims and to announce publicly their new status as Hajjis, they are not meant to be permanent or to be maintained or renewed. The fact that they last for several years after this event is more the result of the Egyptian climate than the intent of the artist or patron.

The introduction by Avon Neal clearly explains the background and steps of the Hajj and its importance to Egyptian Moslems. Parker then arranges her images to illustrate how the artists portray the events and stages of the pilgrimage—from getting to Mecca, circling the Kaabah, Standing Day at Arafat and the visit to the Prophet's Tomb in Medina. She juxtaposes different versions of the

same element or scene such as boats and airplanes or the sacrifice of Ishmael by Abraham to illustrate the work of different areas or artists. She concludes with a section on the artists, enabling us to see those who have created these paintings, and discussing and comparing their styles.

Parker's work preserves a disappearing art form, but it also documents the evolution and ongoing recreation of an artistic tradition. The photographs are beautifully composed and she shows a real respect for and rapport with her subjects, both architectural and human. She captures the unique clarity of Egyptian light, which is a marvel to anyone who has experienced it. The art book format allows the pictures to be reproduced on a large scale so the details are clear. The text is well integrated visually and the captions, though lengthy, provide clear information on the photographs. The writer's emphasis on the lack of sophistication of many of the artists and their patrons is, I think, inaccurate. True, Hajj painting is largely a rural and Upper Egyptian custom, done by artists with no formal training, but all consider themselves artists, some have studied with other Hajj painters, and many are teachers. While none are Hajjis themselves, several have worked abroad. Moreover rural electrification and television—with coverage of the Hajj, has penetrated even small villages.

Hopefully this book will succeed in making the art of Hajj painters better known and appreciated by students of both folk art and Egypt. It is a counterweight to the overwhelming impact that the ancient art of Egypt has on our modern perspective of the country. It is heartening that the tradition of Hajj painting is vigorous and still appreciated by the people for whom it is done.

NEWS FROM CAIRO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

to "avoid, mark and report." The Defense and Army Attache of the US Embassy in Cairo (tel. 357-3122) may be contacted to report unexploded ordinance and landmines and will assist in reporting information to the Egyptian authorities.

When in doubt, play it safe.

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THE DELIGHTS OF FOOD IN CAIRO

BY FRAN VINCENT

WITH EXTRACTS FROM *FLAVORS OF EGYPT, FROM CITY AND COUNTRY KITCHENS*,
BY SUSAN TORGENSEN, CAIRO PRESS, 1995

A conversation involving food with Egyptians can open many doors into their culture and many hours of watching or participating in the preparation of timeless recipes, passed on from generation to generation. The dishes often correspond to religious traditions and the seasonal availability of the many fruits and vegetables. Most homes are not well

equipped with modern facilities and equipment is basic with a single burner often the only means to cook. A small electric hot plate with an *idra*, a special pot which tapers at the top with a tight fitting lid enabling cooking for hours without burning, is used for the preparation of foul *medamis* (fava bean puree). The dining tables are laid with a cloth, crockery and cutlery, and the food served is on dishes as in western countries.

During the first half of this century Cairo's cuisine was influenced by the French, Italians, Turks and Greeks. During the latter half, these links were relinquished and Cairene cuisine regained more of its own national identity. Even so, many of the favored recipes are very similar and are acknowledged as coming from other countries. Visitors who are familiar with Greek and Turkish cuisine will encounter many similarities in the Cairene cuisine of today, such as *mousaka*, stuffed vegetables, *kolocassia*, vine leaves, *salata tahina* and so on. Very recent history has seen great expansion and improvements in freezer facilities in local supermarkets, and a much greater choice of commodities on the shelves. Agricultural innovations have also resulted in the appearance



of new and improved fruits and vegetables on the market. Cairene cuisine has become more sophisticated, particularly in the upper strata of the population.

The most important component of Egyptian food is bread. It is everywhere, displayed along the road side, piled high in wicker baskets and precariously balanced on the heads of vendors as they weave their way through the thronging streets. The predominant bread known as *aish* is usually made with a combination of plain and wholemeal flour with a little leavening to produce a flat bread with a pocket center and soft crust. Its basic character has remained unchanged since ancient times. During the early pre-dynastic period barley, millet and wheat were the principal grains. Barley and millet do not contain gluten forming proteins essential to making light textured bread, so it was hard and chewy. Wheat has opposite properties, but the nature of its proteins can alter if heat is applied at the wrong stage of preparation. Because the early wheat strains had to be heated before threshing so that the husk could be removed, these essential proteins were destroyed causing the bread to be tough and chewy. However, sometime during the early Dynastic and the Old Kingdom the Egyptians developed a strain of wheat which could be threshed without the preliminary heating, and around 2600 BC yeast was incorporated into their breadmaking, vastly improving its palatability. This art of bread making was passed on to the Greeks who later taught the method to the Romans.

Feasts are occasions for traditional and abundant cooking. *Sham El Nessim*—which means “smell the breeze”—always falls on Orthodox Easter Monday and commemorates the beginning of spring. Rich and poor, young and old, Christians and Moslems all celebrate this national holiday, usually in the open air. At dawn parents wake up their children by rubbing their noses with onions dipped in vinegar. The pungent smell has a tingling effect and makes the children jump out of bed, which is precisely the effect desired. It also makes them alert and is believed to influence the children’s quickness for the rest of the year. Breakfast consists of colored hard boiled eggs, *Fiseek* (highly salted, dried grey mullet, skinned, shredded and marinated in equal amounts of lemon juice and oil), spring onions, lettuce and *malana* (green chick peas). It is interesting to note the symbolism of these items. Eggs have always been a symbol of new life and fish symbolize preservation from evil (in imitation of Jonah who, although swallowed by the whale, was rescued from evil, disregarding the fact that the whale is not a fish but a mammal!). Ancient Egyptians ate fish in abundance, as can be seen from the engravings depicting their banquets. Onions, too, are eaten in imitation of the ancient Egyptians who believed that onions not only ward off evil spirits, but cure most diseases. Lettuce and *malana* are greens that abound at this time of the year and symbolize fertility. At the end of the meal endless glasses of very sweet tea are drunk to quench the thirst, especially after eating the fish.

Ramadan, the Moslem month of fasting, is a time of religious observance involving many rituals. Fasting begins before dawn and lasts until the last rays of the sun disappear below the horizon. During that period, no food, drink or evil word must pass between the lips. During the day,

much time is spent preparing the evening’s breakfast, which is as much an important family gathering as it is an essential meal. As soon as the cannon is fired marking the end of the day’s fasting, *al fatiha* (the opening prayer in the Koran) is spoken before partaking of a drink made from dried plants. It is usually *qamar el din* (juice made by dissolving dried pressed apricot sheets), *karkade* or *tamer*



hindi (hibiscus or tamerind, soaked in water, filtered and sweetened to taste). This is followed usually with a hot thin soup which is believed necessary to prepare the stomach to receive the oncoming dishes, which in turn must be food not quickly ingested and must provide long satiety. Bean and meat dishes are preferred to starches. The beans are either cooked with other vegetables, baked with ground beef, or stewed and mashed with eggs, cheeses and pickles. The meat dishes are mostly roasts, stewed steaks or special cuts cooked with plenty of tomato sauce. Pastry dishes, rice and stuffed vegetables complement the meal. To rebuild the blood sugar level and revitalize energy lost through fasting, dessert always constitutes very sweet dishes, the most common being *konafa* (thread like pastry), and *qatayef*

(round flat pastry). These are filled with mixed nuts or soft sweet cream and fried or baked before soaking in syrup. Following this huge meal, dried dates and an assortment of unsalted nuts are nibbled and washed down with sweet mint tea.

Throughout the streets of Cairo at all seasons there are many small shops selling numerous variations of the above mentioned foods. The huge *dammassas* full of *foul medamis*, flavored with garlic and cumin and cooked slowly for hours is eaten for breakfast, lunch, and anytime, and served with hard boiled eggs, olive oil and a squeeze of lemon. The huge vats of frying *tamaaya* (known also as *falafel*), the green broad bean “hamburger” patties served in pockets of bread along with any combination of *foul*, salad, tahina, fried eggplants, or plain; *foul nabad* and *besara*, a soup and a puree respectively; macaroni with bechamel sauce; stuffed pigeons; chickens roasting in rotisseries and always the oriental *shwarmer* stands serving roasted chicken or beef rolled up in pock-

ets of bread accompanied with tahina, salad and pickles. It used to be quite a common sight on Fridays and feast days to see a man with a brightly decorated cart making his way along the streets selling *kosherie*, composed of portions of rice, vermicelli, macaroni, lentils, chickpeas, tomato sauce and caramelized onions, all in individual pots. His skill was in the mixing of the tasty ingredients. It was an inexpensive and delicious fast food equivalent to McDonald’s hamburgers. He is still around in the more traditional streets of Cairo, along with the sandwich man, foul cart, hot sweet potato cart and the *couscousi* (couscous served with cream and sugar) man. These foods are now mainly found in shops and are more expensive. The most famous *kosherie* shop is El Omda in Mohendaseen. I also include a recipe

in this article.

This is only meant to whet the appetite of those who visit and to indicate to those who are curious, this cosmopolitan city’s gastronomic delights. As it is in most cities the best cuisine is found in the homes of its local inhabitants, but visitors can still enjoy many dishes in the restaurants and small shops throughout the city. As more and more young women join the work force, they have less time and less help in their homes, and they often have not learnt the traditional cooking. It is thanks to Susan Torgersen’s cook book *Flavors of Egypt, From City and Country* that many recipes have been recorded. The proceeds from her book sales will finance the Torgersen Scholarship, a fund for needy Egyptian students to study in a field of science. This scholarship will alternate every five years between a male and female student. ♀

ERUPTION OF THERA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

At present, the two main chronometric proposals are a century apart. The later, so-called traditional date is based chiefly on ceramic sequences, relevant finds of stratified pumice, and Egyptian synchronisms, yielding 1535-25 B.C. as the most likely decade. The earlier, revisionist date is based on radiocarbon samples, dendrochronology, ice-cores, bristlecone pine frost rings, and Northern Irish bog oak rings, pointing to the 1630-20 B.C. decade for hemisphere-wide cooling, atmospheric disturbances, and volcanic ash fall.

These phenomena, however, were not necessarily caused by Thera. Sunspot activity or another volcano as distant as New Guinea could have been responsible. In addition, recent studies have suggested that Thera released relatively low quantities of sulfur, which would have formed a



Kosherie

(EGYPTIAN RICE AND LENTILS)
SERVES 6-8

1. In a heavy saucepan or covered skillet heat 2T oil. Add 1 1/4 c. *cooked lentils*. Brown lentils over medium heat 5 minutes, stirring often.
2. Add 3 c. boiling *water or stock*, 1 t. *salt* and a dash of *pepper*.
3. Cook uncovered 10 minutes over medium heat.
4. Stir 1 1/2 c. *cooked rice* into 1 c. boiling water or stock. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 15 minutes.
5. Add 1 c. *cooked macaroni*. Cook 10 minutes more.

Sauce

1. In a saucepan heat together: 3/4 c. *tomato paste*, 3 cups *tomato juice, sauce or pureed tomatoes*, 1 *green pepper* chopped,

- chopped *celery leaves*, 1T *sugar*, 1/2 t *salt*, 1 t *cumin*, 1/4 t *cayenne pepper* or *crushed chilies* to taste.
2. Bring sauce to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 20-30 minutes.

Browned Onions

1. Heat 2T oil in a small skillet.
2. Sauté over high heat until brown and crisp: 5 large sliced *onions*, 4 cloves minced *garlic* (If onions refuse to brown, slice and cover them with salt. Leave 15 minutes. Rinse and wring dry in towel. Saute as above.)

To serve

Put rice and lentil mixture, tomato sauce and onions in individual pots. A good accompaniment is a bowl of cucumber and yogurt salad. ♀

stratospheric screen too thin to have significantly lowered global temperatures. Finally, the available radiocarbon data present a statistically complex picture, subject to reevaluation with every new calibration curve.

The current chronometric stalemate is paralleled by an apparent tex-

ONLY THE AHMOSE STELE DETAILS SUCH SEVERE CATASTROPHE OVER THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF EGYPT

tual dead end. Given the magnitude of the explosion, one would expect some written record of it. Since there are no surviving historical texts from the Aegean, the next best sources would be Egyptian or Mesopotamian documents. Unfortunately, the eruption occurred inopportunely during periods remarkable for their paucity of historical records. In Egypt, this is the end of the Second Intermediate

Period and the rise to power of the Theban brothers Kamose and Ahmose, who expelled the Hyksos and founded the Eighteenth Dynasty of the New Kingdom. In Mesopotamia, this is the end of the Old Babylonian period, with the Hittites’ sack of Babylon about 1595 B.C. ushering in a century with almost no historical material.

THE TEMPEST STELE OF AHMOSE

During the reign of Ahmose (Fig. 3), a highly damaging storm occurred. To record its meteorological nature and ensuing destructions, as well as to commemorate the rebuilding program undertaken, Ahmose erected a stele at Thebes. In 1967 and 1968, Claude Vandersleyen published the stele fragments, which had been used as broken fill in the Karnak Temple’s Third Pylon. Vandersleyen’s familiarity with weather patterns in modern Egypt led him to interpret the text as referring to a localized Theban storm. Based on his translation, Ellen Davis



Fig. 3. AHMOSE'S MUMMY.
(AFTER G. E. SMITH, THE ROYAL MUMMIES
[1912] PL. XII)

concluded in 1990 that this local storm could not be related to the Thera eruption, promising though the stele otherwise seems.

Robert Ritner and I have recently reexamined the text. Three passages explicitly extend the devastation to the whole country, twice using the expression the "Two Lands," standard Egyptian formulation for the Nile Valley and Delta. While sudden, violent storms recur in ancient Egyptian life and literature, only the Ahmose stele details such severe catastrophe over the length and breadth of Egypt. The pharaoh cites deafening noise, darkness, torrents, houses washed into the river and bobbing like boats, and chapels, tombs, and temples damaged, collapsed, or reduced to "that which was never made." Ahmose attributes the storm to divine displeasure yet declares "how much greater this is than the wrath of the great god, than the plans of the gods." The stele finishes by telling how Ahmose "began to reestablish the Two Lands."

ERRATA

Page 7, column 3, bottom line should read: sarr@nowsoft.com.

Page 12, column 3, line 23 should read: basis of blood ties (the Old tribal pattern) or on the basis of merit (the new pattern which Muhammad had championed).

Page 13, column 3, line 6 should read: Basra, Iraq.

In reconsidering the Tempest Stele's potential relevance to the Thera eruption, it is instructive to read descriptions of the comparable volcanic after-effects of Tambora and Krakatau. Numerous journals, ship's logs, letters, and literary works marvel at midday darkness two days later and 500 km distant; detonations heard 4653 km across the Indian Ocean; thunderous noise; and severe earthquakes and storms over a wide area. These are precisely the extraordinary phenomena Ahmose records as occurring throughout Egypt.

CHRONOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

According to high Egyptian chronology, Ahmose ruled 1550-25 B.C.; low chronology puts him at 1539-14 B.C. The stele was carved before his year 22, since his name was written differently the last three years of his reign. Between years 11 and 15, Ahmose destroyed the Hyksos palace of Avaris (Tell ed-Daba'a) in the eastern Delta, built about 1560 B.C. Manfred Bietak's new excavations have recovered thousands of fresco fragments with Aegean stylistic and iconographic features, commissioned by the Hyksos and dumped in a garden after the palace was destroyed. The same post-Hyksos stratigraphical horizon has also yielded numerous pumice fragments which correspond closely with Thera ejecta in

terms of age, size, index of refraction, and chemical composition. Similar pumice comes from core samples taken elsewhere in the eastern Delta.

If the Tempest Stele in fact describes the Thera eruption and its aftereffects, it narrows the date to between years 15 and 22 of Ahmose: 1539/35-28 B.C. (high) or 1529/24-17 B.C. (low). These fit neatly with the traditional proposals of 1535-25 B.C. for the eruption decade. One piece of evidence may further refine the date. In year 22, Ahmose's treasurer Neferperet erected a stele to record the opening of a new quarry for extensive temple constructions throughout Egypt. So late in Ahmose's reign, these building projects seem unlikely to have been part of his post-Hyksos program, but perhaps among his countrywide restoration efforts hailed in the Tempest Stele.

CONCLUSIONS

Ahmose's Tempest Stele of about 1530 B.C., with its striking description of storms, darkness, noise, and damage throughout Egypt, may very well stand as a unique eyewitness account of the Thera eruption. If so, Ahmose not only expelled the Hylese and founded the Eighteenth Dynasty, but also led Egypt through the greatest volcanic event of the Bronze Age world. ♀



Fig. 2. WALL PAINTINGS FROM THERA, SHOWING VOLCANIC LANDSCAPE AND SWALLOWS.
(AFTER S. MARINATOS, THERA IV [1971] COL. PL. A)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE AEGEAN AND THE ORIENT IN THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

Organized by the University of Cincinnati, April 18-20 1997

The Classics Dept. of the Univ. of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati chapter of the AIA announce a three-day international symposium to be held at the University of Cincinnati. The Semple Symposium will honor the 70th anniversary of the arrival of Blegen and Rawson to this city and the 50th anniversary of the publication of Kantor's influential AIA monograph in 1947, which is being reprinted this year in conjunction with the symposium.

Presentation of 30 papers begins Friday morning, Apr. 18 and continues through Sunday afternoon, Apr. 20. The first day of papers will explore and update the topics addressed in Kantor's monograph, the second day will cover topics of interest to Blegen and Rawson. The final day will focus on future directions for the field. For more information, a conference registration form and preliminary program, please write: Dr. Diane Harris-Cline, Dr. Eric H. Cline, Conf Coord., Classics Dept. NI, 0226, Univ. of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0226

List of Scholars Interested in Demotic Studies: compiled and maintained on World Wide Web page of the Oriental Institute's Chicago Demotic Dictionary (<http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/PROJ/DEM/Demotic.html>) or contact Janet Johnson at address below. All scholars, whatever their field of specialization, who would like to be informed about future international congresses for Demotic studies are requested to send to Janet H. Johnson, at postal or e-mail addresses listed below, as much of the following information as is relevant: name, address, name and address of institution, phone number, FAX number, e-mail address, WWW-page address, area(s) of interest within Demotic studies. Since the value of the list will depend on its complete-

ness and accuracy, all Demotists and interested colleagues are urged to submit information about themselves, their current or recent students, and other interested colleagues. This list will attempt to identify institutions which are currently involved in Demotic studies. For universities which offer a program in Demotic, please provide name of university, specific department or program within the university, the address, phone and FAX number, e-mail, WWW addresses of the department, and the name(s) and title(s) of faculty teaching Demotic. For museums which have Demotic materials in their collections, please provide the name of the museum, specific section or department of the museum, address, phone and FAX number, e-mail, WWW addresses, dept. and the name(s) and title(s) of the responsible curator(s). For libraries which acquire Demotic materials, please provide name (and any institutional affiliation) of library, address, phone, FAX number, and e-mail and WWW addresses of library, and name(s) and title(s) of the appropriate contact person(s). If lists of recent and "in progress" dissertations and theses involving Demotic are provided, these will also be posted. Janet H. Johnson, Oriental Institute, Univ. Of Chicago, 1155 E. 58 St., Chicago, IL 60637, USA; e-mail: j.johnson@uchicago.edu

The Egyptian Antiquities Project (EAP) of ARCE/Egypt is soliciting proposals from qualified professional organizations and individuals for Conservation Projects. Proposals are due at EAP office on or before 1 PM Cairo time, on Tuesday, Feb. 18, 1997. Application Package can be obtained from ARCE/EAP at: 2 Midan Kasr Al-Dubara, Garden City, Cairo; Direct Fax and Tel: 202-354-8622, or Tel. 202354-8239/202-305-8683, OR 30 E. 20 St. Suite 401, New York, N.Y. 10003-1310, Fax: 212-529-6856, Tel. 212-529-6661.

On the internet: <http://www.arce.org>

CHANGES AT THE SCA

The Supreme Council of Antiquities' new Secretary General: Prof. Dr. Ali Hassan, one of the few career Antiquities service personalities to head the Council. He succeeded Prof. Dr. Abdel Halim Nur el-Din.

NEW MEMBER LIST

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Ahmed Abdou: Chairman, Dept. of Conservation, Helwan Univ.
Ahmed Nawwar: Dir. Gen., Museums Section, SCA
Gaballah Ali Gaballah: Dean, Faculty of Arch., Cairo Univ.
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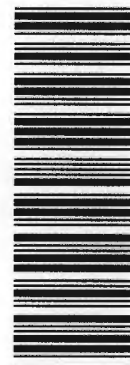


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EXHIBITIONS

CINCINNATI

MISTRESS OF THE HOUSE, MISTRESS OF HEAVEN: WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPT.

Art and artifacts that examine the varied roles of women in ancient Egyptian society. Through January, 5 1997. Cincinnati Art Museum, 513-721-5204.

HOUSTON

SPLENDORS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

On loan from the Pelizaeus Museum, the 200-piece exhibit surveys 4500 years of Pharaonic history. Included are replicas of temples, tombs, burial chambers, a 19 foot papyrus roll from the Book of the Dead. Through March 30. Museum of Fine Art, Houston, 713-639-7300.

LOS ANGELES

ANCIENT ART FROM THE SHUMEI FAMILY

Outstanding collection of Egyptian, Near Eastern, Islamic, and Roman antiquities. Nov. 17-Feb. 9. Los Angeles County Museum of Art 213-857-6011.

NEWARK

RELIGIOUS THEMES IN THE ART OF COPTIC EGYPT

Christian art from the permanent collection. The Newark Museum, 201-596-6550. Through 1996.

NEW YORK

- **AMARNA GALLERIES: EGYPTIAN ART** 1353-1295 B.C.

Distinctive art from the time of Akhenaten and Tutankhamun. Includes yellow jasper head fragment of a queen; a head of Tutankhamun; glass, ivory, and gold objects. Opened October 1996. Egyptian Art, 1st Floor, Lila Acheson Wallace Galleries, Metropolitan Museum of Art 212-879-5500.

- **ROYAL WOMEN OF AMARNA**

Transformation of the Egyptian ideal of beauty during the Amarna period. October 1996 through March 1997. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 212-879-5500.

PHILADELPHIA

THE EGYPTIAN MUMMY

Ongoing exhibition explaining Egyptian ideas about death, health and disease patterns shown by autopsy studies, x-ray studies of mummies from the museum's collection. The University of Penna. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 215-898-4000.

WASHINGTON DC

THE ANCIENT NUBIAN CITY OF KERMA, 2500-1500 B.C.

Ongoing exhibition about Kush, the oldest known city in Africa outside of Egypt to have been scientifically excavated, from The

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. National Museum of African Art, 202-3574600.

WILLIAMSTOWN

ART OF THE ANCIENT WORLDS

Ongoing exhibition of ancient sculptures, vases, jewelry from Greece, Rome, Egypt and the Near East, and the Americas. From the permanent collection. Williams College Museum of Art, 413-597-2429.

LECTURES

Friends of Egyptian Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. All lectures at 7:30 p.m. at MFA, 617-369-3329.

EGYPTIAN QUEENSHIP

Lana Troy, Uppsala University, Dec. 6, 1996, THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM EXCAVATION AT DAHSHUR
Dieter Arnold, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jan. 22, 1997.

ART: NEW DISCOVERIES IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Catharine Roehrig, Metropolitan Museum of Art, March 7.

THE BOSTON-PENN EXCAVATIONS AT SAQQARA: RECENT WORK

Rita Freed, Jean-Louis Lachevre, MFA, April 9.

AMARNA: CITY AND COSMOS

Michael Malinson, London, May 9.